

being connected to the watering system by a pump in a nutrient supply line. As noted in the Office Action, Chaplinsky '174 does not teach that the sprayer comprises a compressed air connection on the active ingredient supply line remote from the active ingredient tank, arranged so that during return operation, active ingredient can be forced from the active ingredient supply line back into the active ingredient tank, as required by claim 7.

Knight '191 is introduced for the purpose of identifying a compressed air connection into the sprayer system. However, Knight '191 does not disclose a compressed air connection on the active ingredient supply line remote from the active ingredient tank, as required by claim 7. Instead, Knight '191 discloses a valve means 1 that selectively connects one of twenty inlet ports to spray guns 32, 33 via a tubular arm 25 and a feed-hose 31. Each of the inlet ports of the valve means, labeled by example as 4, 5, 6 and 21 in Figure 1 of Knight '191, are connected to paint sources (not shown). Additional inlet ports 22 and 23 are connected to a supply of solvent 47 and compressed air 147 respectively, constituting purging fluids.

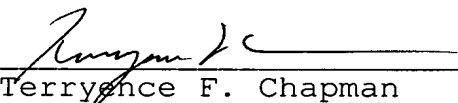
Knight '191 does not disclose that the compressed air is connected to an active ingredient supply line (through ports 4, 5, 6, 21) at any time, nor that the active ingredient is forced from the active ingredient supply line back into its respective tank, as required by claim 7. Further, the apparatus disclosed in Knight '191 is incapable of fulfilling this claim requirement. Each of the sources of active ingredient (i.e. paint), through respective inlet ports 4, 5, 6, 21, cannot be connected to the compressed air supply 147 through the valve means 1. The selection of compressed air (port 23) and any other inlet port are mutually exclusive. The solvent and compressed air are instead connected to the spray guns 32, 33 by the feed-hose 31 to flush waste therethrough. These features of Knight '191 are discussed in more detail in applicant's previous response submitted

September 16, 2008, beginning at page 7, third paragraph, and continuing through page 9, first paragraph, which is incorporated herein by reference.

Applicant respectfully asserts that Knight '191 does not disclose the structural elements of claim 7. Further, the apparatus disclosed by Knight '191 is incapable of connecting the compressed air to the active ingredient supply line to force the active ingredient from the active ingredient supply line back into the active ingredient tank, as required by claim 7. Claim 7 should therefore be considered patentable over the combination of references including Knight '191. Claims 8-11 depend from claim 7 and should be considered patentable therewith. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection and reconsideration of the claims are respectfully requested.

In light of the foregoing, the claims should be considered to be in condition for allowance and early notice of allowability is courteously solicited. If necessary to further prosecution of the application, the Examiner is invited to contact applicant's representatives listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on March 12, 2009.

  
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